

Conservation Compass

Joplin Area Outreach & Education



April May June 2009



SATIONAL

I WAS CUT IN HALF AND SURVIVED!

Seneca, MO-An earthworm was cut in half during a tragic shovel accident. Witnesses say only one of the two halves survived. The half con-

taining the head and hearts (they have 5!) was able to regenerate its missing tail. "That was a lucky worm," says



"Many earthworms local woman. die when this happen, but some are able to recover." The victim was not available for comment but is resting comfortably.

Free To A Good Home!

Joplin Conservation Office will be giving away FREE TREES & SHRUBS in observation of Earth Day! Stop by the Wildcat Glades Conservation and Audubon Center anytime between



10 AM and 3PM on Saturday, April 18th to receive a sapling (while supplies last). One per family or group, please.

The KING Spotted in Carthage!

A Carthage man sees "The King" in his barn while "Love Me Tender" plays on the radio! "He's been hanging around for a few weeks now eating mice. Doesn't bother anyone. My son thought he had left the building but I think he's still around. I wouldn't mind a few more speckled king snakes, or "King" impersonators, living here if they'll keep the rodents out of my grain," says man. Amy Juhala, Naturalist



MOTHER HAS 8,000 BABIES IN ONE DAY!



Public outcry: "Fertility treatments are out of control!!" After further investigation, reporters learned mother was a Fowler's Toad. Local naturalist says, "It's perfectly normal for toads to have this many offspring. Eggs are laid in May or early June in ditches, ponds, and slow,

shallow streams. Toadlets hatch about a week later. Toad eggs are laid in long, double strands, while frog eggs are laid in a large, floating mass."

MY TEETH WON'T STOP GROWING!



Large rodent found gnawing trees at Spring River last night! Animal reportedly had brown fur, webbed feet, a flat tail, and large front teeth. This compulsive chewer has good reason to chomp. Beavers, mice, squirrels, and all rodents have incisors that grow continuously throughout life and must be used constantly to

wear down the growth. A beaver's lips even close behind their incisor teeth so they can chew underwater!

Happy April Fool's Day!



Kevin Badgley Community Outreach Specialist Kevin.Badgley@mdc.mo.gov



Fishy Dilemmas

The arrival of spring creates many outdoor dilemmas regarding how to spend your leisure time in the outdoors (seeking out fish, turkey, mushrooms etc...). Fishing is a great outdoor activity with many rewards ahead, whether you are a seasoned angler or just thinking about trying it, fishing in Missouri offers countless opportunities to hook a variety of fish species while enjoying the outdoors.

Now is a great time to get youngsters and new anglers hooked on fishing! With warmer weather and fish becoming active preparing to spawn, nonstop action awaits while fishing for a variety of types of fish that not only provide a feisty fight but tasty rewards if you so choose.

Crappie - They are common in most of our large reservoirs, rivers, and streams, as well as many smaller public impoundments and private ponds. Crappie may move into the shallows as early as mid-March here in the southern part of the state or typically when water temperatures reach 55 degrees. Crappie may be caught in shallow water from the bank in stained or muddy water (1 or 2 feet) or they may spawn as deep as 20 feet or more in extremely clear water. A minnow fished under a bobber or a small jig cast near woody debris or rocks near the bank is a great way to catch spawning crappie.

Whitebass - These fish swim under the radar of most fishermen who are out seeking blackbass and crappie. Whitebass inhabit most major streams and large lakes; provide ferocious bite and fight, and readily attack jigs and spinners. In spring focus on the fish congregating in the feeder streams, later in the season look for large shad or baitfish schools busting the lake surface; indicating a feeding school of whitebass. All you need is a light or medium-action spinning rod lined with 6 or 8 pound line, a few marabou jigs, small silver crankbaits, or spinners.

Bluegill and their counterparts - Found in small streams, ponds and large lakes, these are aggressive and easy to catch during their spawning period, which usually peaks near the end of May, but may continue until late July, or even August. These panfish are terrific fighters and fun to catch on ultra-light rods with 2- or 4-pound-test line. Natural baits, like crickets, river worms, nightcrawlers, meal worms, wax worms, or small artificial jigs, crankbaits, or spinners could result in nonstop action.

If you are thinking about heading out to try your luck, check out the calendar of events page and the great lineup of FISHING EVENTS we have scheduled in our area from the Kid's Day at Roaring River in May, Kellogg Lake Kid's Day in Carthage or a Friday Night Family Fishing Night in June. Make sure to stop by the Joplin Conservation Office and

pick up the latest fishing prospects, area maps, regulations and permits. Don't forget to make some "Lunker Cookies" and pack all the essentials for a full day of fishing. These fish, as well as many other species, can provide nonstop action this time of year! Enjoy your

 $^{
m Page~2}$ fishing dilemma, get out, and take a kid (or kid at heart) fishing!





Selection is Key to Tree Success

Many people get that tree planting itch this time of year. Unfortunately, planting a tree is one of the last steps in the process to a successful, thriving, healthy tree that provides the benefits desired by the planter. When desiring to plant a tree you need to ask some basic questions:

How much room is available for the tree when it is FULL grown? Different trees need different space requirements. These include adequate distance from buildings, above and below ground utilities, sidewalks and streets, other plants, and more. A bur oak that can have a trunk 4 feet in diameter, 75 feet tall and similar crown spread needs more space than an eastern redbud that may get one foot in diameter, 30 feet tall and slightly less wide. Keep in mind that more than one house has been eaten by the cute little evergreen.

What do I want this tree to do? Is this tree to shade the house, is it to add spring flowers and / or fall fruit, or is it to provide wildlife habitat or some other benefit or group of benefits? Small trees may provide flowers, colorful fruit, wildlife habitat, and shade a window, but not the house. A large oak will shade the house and provide wildlife habitat, but no showy flowers or fruit.



What kind of environmental requirements does the tree have? Is the planting site a heavy clay with large rocks on a hill top, a loamy clay near a stream, drought tolerant, have insect and disease issues, receive full sun all day with lots of wind, or shaded most of the day. Different trees tolerate these conditions better than others.

After pondering these questions, you will be left with a short list of trees to select from. Keep in mind that no tree is "perfect," but will work in a given location. Various University Extension and State Forestry web sites provide great resources to determine if a tree is right for the place you have selected. Completing this search can be as rewarding as planting the tree, so be careful and select the right tree for your right place.

Tree Identification Workshops

*Registration not required but is requested

- May 19, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Downtown City Park -El Dorado Springs, MO, Meet on north side on Spring Street.
- May 21, Thursday, 6:30 p.m., Ewert Park Joplin, MO Meet in north parking lot.





The WILD SIDE to Private Lands

Randy Haas, Private Lands Conservationist

Randy.Haas@mdc.mo.gov



BURNING THE GLADE





By the time you read this, and if weather conditions have been favorable, some, or all of the glades will have been burned at Wildcat Park. Some folks understand how important it is to maintain the integrity of the glade by using prescribed fire, but others do not. The last time we burned the glade, in 2002 or 2003, we had public concerns about damaging the glade animals (box turtles, rabbits, snakes, spiders, and lizards). Snakes and other small critters usually escape harm by

finding a hole or rocky area. Many times, box turtles burrow in the soil or loose rock, and the fire will do little or no harm. Inevitably, there are a few caught off guard and they will usually succumb to the fire.

As a whole, glades will be much more vigorous, rich, and diverse by utilizing prescribed fire. It is almost a necessity to burn, if a glade is to be kept intact and in prime condition. Trees and invasive plants, such as euonymus, Japanese honeysuckle, and winter creeper, can be set back with fire. In some cases, with fire and herbicide, it is possible to eliminate them altogether! Prescribed fire will also stimulate the desirable grasses and forbs and eliminate any accumulation of dead vegetation from previous growing seasons.

Burning presents nearly insurmountable problems though, and safety is of the utmost concern. We have to be very cautious of where the smoke is going for nearby roads and adjacent homes. Usually only two or three wind directions may be considered. Wind speed is critical. If the wind is too strong, it will keep the smoke closer to the ground and send smoke some distance from the glade. The rough terrain of the glade makes it difficult to use mechanized equipment. Manpower, with associated hand tools, swatters, rakes, backpack blowers, and sprayers, becomes very important to accomplishing the glade burn safely and effectively. Natural barriers and firebreaks will be used whenever possible. Ponds, streams, roads, and trails provide excellent firebreaks.

Beginning in the 1950s, the Smoky Bear philosophy promoted fires as dangerous and destructive. We have forgotten that before the area was settled by Europeans, fire was a rather common occurrence. If it wasn't for fire, we wouldn't have the scattered, small remnant glades, fens, and native prairie tracts left! Now, with fire suppression in the last 60 years, these natural areas fight a battle with succession. Mother Nature just progresses to mature trees, over time, if nothing is done to prevent it. If a prairie is not haved or burned periodically, trees will eventually take it over. Next time you drive through the Ozarks, glance around at areas along the wooded hillsides. The glade areas are usually very easy to pick out now - they are almost always overgrown with eastern red cedar trees, which is very obvious in winter!



So the next time you see smoke, don't automatically think that something bad is occurring. If a prescribed fire is done properly, and with an objective in mind, then it is a great management tool!

Field Guide to \[\bigcirc_{\bigcirc}\bigcirc_{\bigcirc}\bigcirc Your Backyard**S**

Not Stumped By Morels

I don't think we could begin to keep track of the number of natural items brought into our office for identification throughout the year; we see everything from galls to window-killed songbirds. I'm proud to say though, we seem to identify the majority of the "mysteries" with speed and accuracy and the challenge is always a nice break from the routine.

The two categories that sometimes throw us are the nondescript caterpillars and some fungi. Caterpillar ID usually takes a little effort thumbing through some reliable field guides (not a big challenge). But unidentified fungi species can be tricky.

You can count on two questions accompanying the mystery fungus:
1) what is this? and 2) can I cook/eat it? A smile comes over our faces when those questions are coupled with the beloved morel mushrooms. April showers may bring May flowers, but avid outdoorsmen and women look to the warm temperatures and moisture of April to bring morels; affectionately regarded as "woodfish" by those of us from deep Ozark and Aʻppalachia family roots.' Jeff Cantrell 4 Morels are probably the most prized by mushroom hunters and if you think anglers are closed lipped as to where the good fishing holes are on Shoal Creek, you should try to find a "honeyhole" location for morels. Morels seem to fruit in large numbers, although single individuals can be found. Habitat can range from pine and oak/ hickory forests, old orchards, and some-times even gardens and yards if mulch has been applied. Everyone has their theories of where to look. Often you hear about investigating around the technic because trees and there is truth to this because there should be ample forest litter to nourish the morels. They are easily recognized by appearing like a spongy, long bell on a stalk. Different morels can vary in color from black, tan to cream and only morels free of decay should be picked.

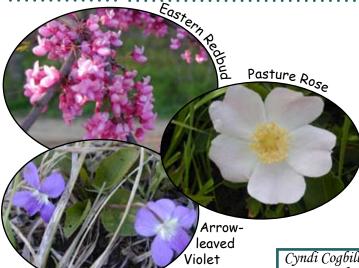
A word of caution to people trying morels for the first time, occasionally a person is sensitive, so even "edible" mushrooms should be sampled at first in very small quantities. Always clean and cook them

thoroughly. And come' see us for top-notch recipes, besides being pretty good identifiers we are





Ask the Naturalist



Q: What is an easy way to start using wild edibles?

Put edible wild flowers in your salads! Use the whole flowers from Eastern redbud and violets this spring. Gather the petals from wild roses in the spring and summer. These flowers will make colorful additions to any salad.

Guidelines:

- Look for fresh, healthy flowers.
- Obtain permission to pick flowers and make sure they have not been treated with toxic chemicals.
- Pick only what you will need. Do not remove too many flowers from one plant or from a particular area.
- Carefully wash the blossoms and pat dry. Add to your favorite salad.

Cyndi Cogbill, Public Service Assistant Cyndi.Cogbill@mdc.mo.gov

Page 5







Missouri Department of Conservation Joplin Office Program Registration

All programs are free and require registration; please contact the Joplin Conservation Office at **(417) 629-3423** to register. If you are unable to attend a program, please call to cancel so someone on the waiting list may attend.

April 2005

- 4 Saturday, 6:30 8:00 p.m., The Adventures of John Colter: Explorer/Trapper Extraordinaire, All Ages, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center

 Portrayed in a Chautauqua format by Charles Wesley Parker, a Joplin High School teacher,

 John Colter lives again in the year 1810 to speak of his adventures with Lewis and Clark and
 - John Colter lives again in the year 1810 to speak of his adventures with Lewis and Clark and his experiences as one of the very first fur trappers in the Northwest.
- 8 Wednesday, 6:00 p.m., Naturescaping: Using Missouri's Native Plants, Adults, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center
- 10 Friday, 2:00 3:30 p.m., Good Friday Spring Hike at Kellogg Lake, Families, Kellogg Lake Park, Carthage
 - School is out! Spring has sprung! Dress for the weather and bring your camera, binoculars, and field guides as we search for signs of spring at Kellogg Lake Park. *Discover Nature Families*
- 15 Wednesday, 9:00 a.m. 3:30 p.m., Shoal Creek CSI Canoe Trip, Adults, Wildcat Glade Conservation & Audubon Center
 - Hop in a canoe and help us investigate vegetation, bird life, mammal signs, and the health of the river. We will meet at Wildcat Glade Conservation and Audubon Center and carpool to the put-in site.
- 18 Saturday, 10:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m., Earth Day Event, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center
 - The Conservation Department will be giving away free native trees and shrubs (one per family).
- 18 & 19 Saturday, 8:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m. AND Sunday, 8:00 a.m. 12:00 p.m., Cooking with Dutch Ovens, Women, Walter Woods Conservation Area Please register with Jean Mayer 417-895-6881 ext 236
 - COST: \$15.00 pre-registration fee which will be returned to participants upon attendance. Your pre-registration check holds your space in the workshop. This is a two-day program. **Discover Nature Women**
- 24 Friday, 4:00 5:30 p.m., Super Spring Hike, All Ages, Walter Woods Conservation Area Explore the spring woods! Tiny wildflowers, budding trees, and spring peepers are calling us!
- 28 Tuesday, 8:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m., Basic Archery Instructor training for the MO National Archery in the Schools program, Teachers, Walter Woods Conservation Area

For teachers in private or public schools. The deadline for registration is April 14th.

Hang pages 6 and 7 on your refrigerator!

Don't forget to register for programs!



May Letter

- 2 Saturday, 10:00 11:30 a.m., Wildflower Hike, All Ages, Walter Woods Cons. Area Learn wildflower identification, folklore, and gardening.
- 5 Tuesday, 3:30 4:30 p.m., Alphabet Woods, All Ages, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center

A, Acorn! B, Butterfly! Stop by the MDC office any time between 3:30 and 4:30 to pick up your journal and instructions. Return your completed journal for a prize.

9 Saturday, 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Kid's Craft Day: Mother's Day Edition, All Ages, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center

Drop by any time and make some "natural" gifts for your mom! Stop by the free gift wrapping station on your way out!

- 16 Saturday, whistle blows at 6:30 a.m., Kid's Fishing Day, Roaring River State Park
 No registration required.
- 21 Thursday, 12:00 3:00p.m., Alphabet Woods, All Ages, Walter Woods Cons. Area
- 23 Saturday, 10:00 a.m. OR 1:00 p.m., Amazing Race, Families with children 7 and up, Wildcat Park

Family teams will explore Wildcat Park in search of competition flags! After an introduction to orienteering, the race is on! Dress for hiking off-trail (long pants, closed-toe shoes, etc).

Discover Nature Families

6 Saturday, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., Kid's Fishing Day, Ages 15 and younger, Kellogg Lake Park, Carthage

See back page of the Compass for details! No registration required.

16 Tuesday, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Prairie Adventure, All Ages, Diamond Gove Prairie Conservation Area

Dress for hiking through the prairie, and bring binoculars, if you have them.

- 17 Wednesday, 5:30 p.m. OR 7 p.m., Introduction to Canoeing, Adults and Children Ages 8 and up, Kellogg Lake Park, Carthage
 - Two classes will be offered (space is limited, so register early); Wear clothing that can get wet. All children under 16 MUST be accompanied by an adult.
- 19 Friday, 10:00 a.m. 2:00 p.m., Floating Hike on Shoal Creek, Women ages 8 and up, Wildcat Glade Conservation & Audubon Center

We will meet at the Center and carpool to the put-in site. Girls 8–16 must be accompanied by an adult. New to canoeing? Sign up for the June 17th introduction program. **Discover Nature Women**

19 Friday, 5:00 – 8:00 p.m., Friday Night Fishing, Families, Walter Woods Conservation Area

Gather your family and come to Walter Woods for some catch and release fishing! We will provide the poles and bait. Participants 16 and older must have a valid fishing license. **Discover Nature Families**

25 Thursday, 8:00 – 9:30 p.m., Firefly Frenzy, All Ages, Walter Woods Conservation Area Spend a hot summer evening catching lightning bugs with us! We'll learn all about this bright beetle and its habits. Stories, crafts, and a firefly search on the lawn will complete the evening. Bring a friend and a collection jar!

Page 7

Teachers, Tracks, Treks and Trails Jeff Cantrell, Conservation Education and Outreach Jeff.Cantrell@mdc.mo.gov

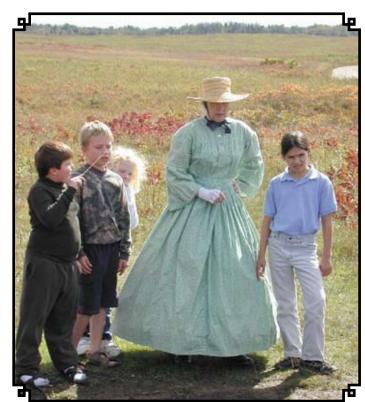
Tallgrass Time Travel

How many times have friends shared their vacation pictures of the Grand Canyon, Yosemite, or other such natural wonders with us and said: "the photo just does not do it justice; you had to be there to witness the grandeur ..."

> The same goes for Missouri's Tallgrass Prairies. Everyday thousands of four-state citizens drive by our remnant prairie tracts and prairie conservation areas and pay little notice to the difference between them and our common pasturelands. Like all great things, they must be experienced first hand; a photo or merely driving by doesn't do the prairie experience justice.

Knowing teachers are more likely to instruct passionately about things they deeply care about, we are offering a first hand, handson experience for our local homeschool parents, youth leaders and professional teachers. It takes only minutes after your first steps on a virgin prairie to witness the diversity of life. Let your mind wander back through time to the very treks made by early pioneers and

Americans. Educators can use Native these training opportunities for their personal and professional continuing education. We will touch on pre-settlement Missouri, grassland wildlife (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects), wildflower identification, traditional foods and medicines, Native American cultures, pioneer life, and current practices to conserve this now rare and valuable habitat. conservation department also has classroom resources and curriculum to compliment your existing studies. To arrange an educational prairie outing on a local area just organize a group of your peers and give me a call or drop me an e-mail. Educational field trips can be directly after school or in the early evening. It is a great opportunity to go beyond the photos and text books and really experience a piece of Missouri's natural history and the time travel is a quarantee. Page 8





Where Can I Float???

What rights do users have while on Missouri streams that flow through private property?

The topic of stream access for floating and fishing is a topic often debated among property owners and recreational users of Missouri Streams. Regardless of what is decided in these debates, the issue has already been settled by the Missouri Supreme Court by a decision it handed down in the 1954 case of Elder vs. Delcour.

The decision in Elder vs. Delcour laid the framework for the way in which Missouri streams may be used for recreation. In its decision the Court identified three classifications of streams and defined the use of each. These three classifications are public navigable, public non-navigable, and private non-navigable.

- Public navigable waters are larger streams that are large enough for commercial watercraft (barges) to float on. Examples of this type of waterway would be the Missouri and Mississippi Rivers.
- Public non-navigable waters are mid-sized streams that are too small to float commercial water-craft, but are sufficiently large enough to float canoes, small fishing boats, or logs. The landowner owns to the center thread of the stream and has the right to remove sand and gravel from the stream in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Many popular area fishing streams would fall into this category. Examples would include the Elk River, Roaring River, Shoal Creek, Flat Creek, Big Sugar Creek, etc.
- Private non-navigable waters are streams that are too small to float canoes, small fishing boats, or logs. Landowners not only own the bed to the middle thread of the stream, but also have the right to control the use of these streams.

In public navigable and pubic non-navigable waters, recreational users may use these waters without being in violation of the trespass statutes of Missouri, even though the lands they are upon may be privately owned. In these streams people are allowed to float, fish (in accordance with applicable laws and regulations), and wade in these waters. Users of these streams also have the legal right to carry boats around obstacles



Page 9

in the waterway where obstructions preclude the passage of their boats, subject to liability for damage they might inflict on the landowners property. They must also take the "nearest path" around the obstruction and re-enter the stream. Finally, users of these streams have the legal right to tie up their boats or to camp on these streams provided they use the stream bed, gravel bars and clearly recognizable areas over which the stream flows during its normal stages. The ruling did not authorize trespassing to gain access to any stream. Persons who wish to recreate on any of these streams must access them from a public access point (public fishing access, county road right-of-way, etc.) or must have the landowner's permission to cross private property to get to the stream.

For questions or more information on stream access, contact your local Conservation Agent or any MDC public contact office.

Zoning for Conservation

Blake Stephens, Fisheries Biologist Blake.Stephens@mdc.mo.gov

Missouri Department of Conservation management biologists have a wide variety of conservation tools at their disposal to help landowners and land managers meet their individual conservation objectives. One of these conservation tools that is often misunderstood is a conservation easement (CE).

A CE is a land-use agreement in which the landowner voluntarily limits certain development activities in order to conserve the distinctive natural resources of their property. It is a way to ensure the land will forever be managed for conservation purposes while maintaining private ownership, management, and access. It's like zoning a portion of the land for conservation.

Most CEs are perpetual in nature, meaning they are tied to the property deed and remain in place regardless of how many times the land is bought or sold. Each CE is tailor-made to meet the needs of the individual landowner. It may be set up on all or part of their land, and the landowner helps decide any specific restrictions.

Conservation easements are either donated or sold to a local nonprofit organization known as a land trust that is responsible for holding and enforcing the conservation easement. The largest such organization in Southwest Missouri is Ozark Regional Land Trust (ORLT). Donated easements may provide tax savings on income and estate (property) taxes, while selling a conservation easement provides immediate compensation for the easement.

If you are interested in finding out more about conservation easements give me a call at the Neosho MDC office (417) 451-4158 or e-mail. You may also check out Ozark Regional Land Trust's website at www.ORLT.org for more detailed information on how conservation easements work and the potential tax benefits associated with them.

The WILD Side of Cooking

Lunker Cookies - courtesy of Karen McGlamery

Ingredients:

1 c. butter or margarine (2 sticks), softened

🗦 c. packed light brown sugar

½ c. granulated sugar

2 large eggs

 $1\frac{1}{2}$ c. all-purpose flour

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1 tsp. almond extract (or vanilla)

½ tsp. salt

₹ c. dried cranberries

 $\frac{3}{4}$ c. slivered almonds, toasted



Directions:

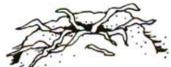
- 1. Preheat oven to 350 F. In large bowl, with mixer on medium speed, beat butter and sugars 2 minutes or until creamy, occasionally scraping bowl. Reduce speed to low; beat in eggs, flour, baking soda, cinnamon, almond extract, and salt just until blended. Stir in oats and remaining ingredients.
- 2. Drop dough by rounded measuring tablespoons, 2 inches apart, onto ungreased cookie sheet. Bake cookies 14 to 15 minutes or until tops are golden. Cool cookies on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.



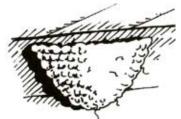
Conservation Kids

In the spring, birds are busy building nests! Different kinds of birds make different kinds of nests depending on the bird's size and habitat. Match up these birds with their nests.



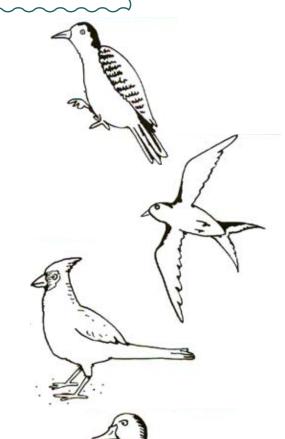






Keep Them Wild!

Baby birds are rarely abandoned. It's fun to watch them grow, but leave nestlings alone and let nature take it's course!



Missouri Conservation Frontiers

Use a map and compass to navigate a cross-country hike. Record your route on a map and mark your compass bearings at each major turn along your route. For more map and compass fun, come to the Amazing Race Program on May 23rd! See the Spring Events page for more detail.

This activity is from the MO Conservation Frontiers program. This free program helps youths learn about Missouri's natural resources and how to enjoy and protect them. As they complete the activities, they will earn points and receive special Frontiers awards! To enroll your child, classroom, or youth organization contact our office at (417) 629-3423.

Page 11





8th Annual Kid's Fishing Day

Kellogg Lake, Carthage Saturday, June 6th

Time: 8:00 am - 12:00 pm

For ages 15 and under... Bring your fishing gear & sunscreen to enjoy a fun-filled day that includes the following:

- * Conservation Education Stations featuring our fish, forests and wildlife!
- * Drawings for prizes!
- * Free hotdogs, snacks & drinks!

Going Green! Save postage & paper! The Conservation Compass is now available online! If you'd like to start receiving our newsletter by e-mail please call the Joplin Conservation Office at (417) 629-3423 or e-mail Diana. Steele@mdc.mo.gov

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